

This past year has been one of challenges and opportunities for agriculture in West Virginia. Even as we defended our state against the threats of terrorism and disease, we saw new markets open up for the state's agriculture-based businesses.

The attacks of September 11, 2001, made us all acutely aware of the dangers we face from international terrorism. Outbreaks of disease in neighboring countries and states revealed how easily the food supply can be disrupted.

Through the hard work of my staff at the West Virginia Department of Agriculture and the USDA, we have been able to keep West Virginia disease free and safe from the threat of terrorism.

It has been a coordinated effort.

This same cooperation opened new doors of opportunity for West Virginia's farming community.

Grant money from the USDA combined with the hard work of marketing specialists from my staff gave West Virginia agribusinesses the support they needed to break into the international marketplace.

Today, West Virginia cottage industries are making a name for themselves and creating jobs for the people of our state. This past year was also one of stability.

While many states were losing family farms at an alarming rate, West Virginia has been able to hold onto this heritage. Our 20,500 family farms earn more than \$519 million annually in gross income.

We are also working together with national and local organizations in a concerted effort to protect our farmlands from the threat of urban sprawl.

This Bulletin is a testament to the work of the West Virginia farmer, and to the work of the West Virginia Agriculture Statistics Service (WVASS), headed by State Statistician Dale R. King and Deputy State Statistician Radley Edwards.

Together we are meeting the challenges of the new world in which we live.

Sincerely,



Gus R. Douglass  
Commissioner of Agriculture



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**Commissioner of Agriculture**